

**Employee Engagement effect on Work Productivity in the Public Sector in Kenya: A Case
of the Ministry of Devolution and Planning**

BY

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
SCHOOL OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN HUMAN
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

MOI UNIVERSITY

2016

DECLARATION BY CANDIDATE

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my family for the tremendous support during my study specifically, to my husband for moral and financial inspiration.

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Employee: used in this study to refer to employees of the public service commission currently deployed to the ministry of Devolution and Planning.

Employee engagement: refers to the extent to which employees feel passionate about their jobs, are committed to the organization, and put discretionary effort into their work.

Productivity: refers to the effectiveness of productive effort, especially in industry, as measured in terms of the rate of output per unit of input.

Employee productivity: refers to the output of an employee in a specific period of time. Typically, the productivity of a given worker was assessed relative to an average for employees doing similar work.

ABSTRACT

Work productivity in any given organization depends on various factors, such as job satisfaction, motivation, employee engagement among others. These factors may also be affecting performance of government ministries thus government projects fail to see the light of the day despite huge resources invested in them. This study sought to investigate the effects of employee engagement on work productivity in the public sector. The specific objectives were: to examine employee perceptions of engagement and work, to evaluate employee engagement strategies and levels of engagement employed, to assess the effect of employee engagement on work productivity and suggest possible interventions in enhancing employee engagement. The study was based on the Social Exchange Theory. Survey research design was employed with a target population of 1300 employees based at the ministry's headquarters. From the target population, a sample of 130 respondents was picked using stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques. These constituted 10% of the target population. Data was collected using open ended and closed ended questionnaires which were administered to senior staff, middle cadre staff and the technical staff. The data collected was coded and input in SPSS version 14. The data was analysed descriptively using mean, frequencies, percentages and correlation analysis and presented in tables and charts. The study found that employees were fairly engaged with most employees being emotionally and physically engaged but minimally cognitively engaged. Moreover, the study found that there was average employee productivity that correlated with the average employee engagement. The data shows the mean statistic for emotional engagement ranging from 3.02 and 4.05; cognitive engagement ranging between 2.93 and 4.29; and physical engagement ranging between 3.60 and 4.65. It is in this respect that engagement is rated at average significance. The study therefore recommends that the Government recognizes the role of employee engagement in achieving its mandate, engage in transformational leadership which is critical in enhancing employee engagement, set up policies and guidelines on the drivers of engagement explored in the study and take a holistic approach with multiple functions working together to increase and sustain engagement levels. The study concludes that employee engagement impacts significantly on employee attitudes and commitment which affects productivity. Organizational effectiveness can be linked to the level of engagement the organisation has with its employees as openness to change and new ideas presents an opportunity to realize its objectives using employee engagement strategies.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The chapter has critically examined key issues that formed the basis of this study; namely background of the study, statement of the problem, study objective, specific objectives, study questions, justification of the study, the scope and limitations.

1.2 Background of the study

Work productivity in any given organization is dependent of various factors such as employee engagement, environment, motivation etc. The current constitution has stipulated several change in the National Government some of them being the devolvement of certain functions to the local government. This has called for a holistic approach in the way government articulates its functions hence the need to seriously engage its workforce for better services to the public. Anchored on this development is the need to develop a human resource that has capacity to realize transformative leadership.

Baumruk (2004) contends that every organization wants to gain competitive advantage and employee engagement is the best tool for achieving it. In this regard, employee engagement becomes a crucial factor in the measurement of an organizations orientation towards competitive performance. Mokaya and Kipyegon (2014) further indicate that employee engagement involves creating prospect for human resources to attach with their managers, colleagues and organization. Engagement is a perception that places continuous improvement, change and flexibility at the empathy of what it means.

Employee engagement is a relatively new term in HR literature and really started to come to prominence from 2000 onwards. Tasker (2004) defines engagement as a beneficial two-way relationship where employees and employers “go the extra mile” for one another. According to Tasker, research conducted via the Personnel Today website involving 400 HR professionals, one in four organizations admitted that staff were not engaged, that the situation was worsening, and 44% said that tackling the issue of engagement was an overwhelming challenge. This is a clear indication that the subject has not been systematically researched especially in providing an explanation for the increasing number of reports of government projects that go unrealized or fail to meet their intended goals.

According to Hochschild (1983), disengaged employees uncouple themselves from work roles and withdraw cognitively and emotionally. Kahn (1990) described engagement as the harnessing of organizational members to their work role; in engagement, employees express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during the role performance. This highlights the fact that employee engagement matters as it impacts on companies’ bottom lines, both through HR related impacts such as recruitments and retention and through wider impacts on productivity, profit and achieving the aims and objectives of the organization (Tasker, 2004).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Service delivery in the public sector is still a challenge in spite of all the resources that the government has committed towards this course. The researcher sought to understand what could be the underlying issues as far as service delivery in the public sector is concerned. Do employees who are charged with this responsibility fully understand their mandate? Are they fully engaged to discharge their duties with commitment? Is there a correlation between employee engagement and work productivity in the Public Sector? The researcher therefore carried out the study to get answers to these questions. A researcher, Karen Wilson of the University of Missouri, Columbia carried out a research in May 2009 titled “a survey of employee engagement “. In her dissertation, she recommended that more research specifically on human services field on engagement levels be carried out to shed more light on employee engagement aspects because studies in this area are limited. This is the second reason why the researcher developed interest in carrying out a research in this area. Employees are key contributors to these achievements and their engagement/disengagement may affect organizational outcomes.

The Ministry of Devolution and Planning places a huge responsibility on the public servants on service delivery in the public sector that cut across all levels and ages of the Kenyan society. The Ministry has made some great strides such as the establishment of Huduma centers, revolutionized the National Youth Service and the automated various government systems such as the e-procurement, the electronic transfer payment, etc. Despite employee engagement being an important ingredient to employee productivity, there is limited empirical research that has been conducted on the subject matter in relation to public sector employees in Kenya. This study sought to establish the

relationship that exists between employee engagement and work productivity in the public sector and at what levels the public sector engages its employees.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of employee engagement on work productivity in the public sector in Kenya with specific focus on the Ministry of Devolution and planning.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

This study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) Examine the employee perceptions of employee engagement and work productivity in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning of Kenya.
- (ii) Identify employee engagement strategies and levels employed by the Ministry of Devolution and Planning of Kenya.
- (iii) Evaluate the effect of employee engagement on employee productivity in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning of Kenya.

1.4 Study Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What extent does motivation affect engagement in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning?
2. To what extent does commitment influence engagement in the Ministry of Devolution and planning?
3. How does employee satisfaction influence engagement in the ministry of Devolution and Planning?

4. What is the level of employee engagement in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this study will provide insight and information for administrators, practitioners and researchers about employee engagement in organizations and more so in the public service. The human resource practitioners may benefit from the feedback and could implement strategies for change to address some of the concerns from the respondents. Administrators from other ministries and the entire public sector may also benefit from the study by understanding how critical the issue of engagement is and can be able to develop and implement change strategies that would improve employee engagement in the public sector thereby increasing the overall effectiveness of the organization and possibly decrease the levels of disengagement. Why do a research at the Ministry of Devolution and Planning? The reason why I choose to do a research under this Ministry is because the Directorate of Personnel Management Services, which is responsible for the management of all employees in the public service, falls under this Ministry. There is no other Ministry which could be better placed than this one to comment on issues of employee engagement. The study will also add to the body of knowledge especially on the area of employee engagement and may help other researchers to explore other areas that have not be covered by this study.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study had limitations both in scope and methodology. The study was limited to scope - the Ministry of evolution and Planning and to the government departments within the Ministry. Moreover, the study was limited to individuals who were representative of the departments since the researcher could not accommodate all the employees. In terms of methodology, the study was limited to the use of a case study due to time and resource constraints. Moreover, the government departments and ministries are many and may not be captured in a study such as the current one. Access to respondents provided a challenge especially for middle level employees who sometimes were on field assignments and were difficult to reach. Moreover, some respondents withdrew from the study compelling the researcher to recruit new respondents.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter presents a review of relevant or significant literature pertaining to the study. The chapter has closely looked at the characteristics of employee engagement, organizational outcomes of employee engagement, dimensions of employee engagement, Employee engagement and productivity, theoretical and conceptual framework.

2.2 Concept of Employee engagement

Employee engagement is the extent to which workforce commitment, both emotional and intellectual, exists relative to accomplishing the work, mission and vision of the organization. Engagement is a state where an individual is not only intellectually committed but also has a great emotional attachment with his/her job that goes beyond the call of duty, so as to further the interest of the organization. Thus, employee engagement assumes significance as a way of managing people in organizations because engaged employees are believed to deliver high quality committed service. Organizations are shifting their focus toward employee engagement because it has received research attention as a key determinant of performance (Macey, Schneider, Barbera & Young, 2009).

2.2.1 Importance of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is important to the achievement of any organizations objectives. Employee engagement' is a relatively new term in HR literature and really started to come to prominence from 2000 onwards. Tasker (2004) defines engagement as a

beneficial two-way relationship where employees and employers “go the extra mile” for one another. According to Tasker, research conducted via the Personnel Today website involving 400 HR professionals, one in four organizations admitted that staff were not engaged, that the situation was worsening, and 44% said that tackling the issue of engagement was an overwhelming challenge. This is a clear indication that the subject has not been systematically researched on especially in providing an explanation for the increasing number of reports of government projects that go unrealized or fail to meet their intended goals.

Employee engagement has positive outcomes to the employee and the organization. Work engagement is a positive experience in itself (Schaufeli & Baker 2004, Sonnentag, 2003). An engaged workforce result in customer satisfaction, lower absenteeism, motivation, high performance, low employee turnover etc. with the outcome of high productivity and profitability. Successful organizations have engaged employees at all levels of management. All their beliefs, feelings and actions are such that they believe and promote the very best in the organization. They are satisfied and attached to their job, work hard to achieve good results and promote the organization to others.

Meere (2005) describes three levels of engagement:

- Engaged - employees who work with passion and feel a profound connection to their organization. They drive innovation and move the organization forward;
- Not engaged – employees who attend and participate at work but are timeserving and put no passion or energy into their work; and

- Disengaged – employees who are unhappy at work and who act out their unhappiness at work. According to Meere (2005), these employees undermine the work of their engaged colleagues on a daily basis.

The factors that determine engagement are primarily driven by the organization and it is the extent to which the organization takes these issues on board and addresses them in an effective manner that influence engagement levels. Of course engagement is a two-way process and whilst engagement is organization-led, it requires inputs from the employee as well. This study sought to explore how employees in a government agency place different values on these factors and also how these driving factors influence the implementation of government projects in Kenya.

The government of Kenya has lately engaged in a public sector reform programme to make its institutions responsive to public needs and to increase efficiency in the provision of public services and implementation of government programmes and projects. Like other African countries, these efforts in Kenya have been driven primarily by the fact that the state bureaucracy in the country has been underperforming and public service delivery has not been serving the public interest within its most optimal capability. The reforms in Kenya evolved and culminated in the notion of re-engineering of the public sector in the context of public sector transformation, drawing on elements of what came to be known in the literature and practice as the “New Public Management” (NPM). This NPM broad term symbolizes the aim of fostering a performance-oriented culture that seeks to revamp the process through which public organizations operate in order to

increase efficiency, effectiveness, and encompassing client-oriented, mission-driven, and quality-enhanced management (Hope, 2012).

In order to achieve these reforms, the government has identified five broad policy areas examined under the Civil Service Reform Programme (CSRP) (Marwa and Zairi, 2009). These include: a) The streamlining of organizational structure to reflect better defined ministerial and departmental functions, including clear definition and specification of the internal functions of ministries and departments, clear hierarchy of authority and span of control, and more accurate job descriptions; b) Staffing Levels– Including downsizing of the service; establishment of appropriate staffing levels for all cadres in the service; and improving staffing control mechanisms through computerization of the establishment and improvement of the payroll system; c) The achievement of compensation levels that were geared towards attracting and retaining professional and managerial talent in a competitive market economy as well as monetization of allowances; d) Personnel Management and Training – Including the rationalization of personnel management policies; identification of inadequacies in the existing personnel planning and vacancy management; improvement of disciplinary systems; promotion; and capacity development; and e) Financial and Performance Management– Including transparency and accountability in financial management; institutionalization of control systems including computerization; management of the national budget; clear standards against which performance can be accurately measured; perfection of performance evaluation instruments; and use of performance evaluation to impinge upon personnel replacement, training, discipline and rewards for enhanced productivity.

Perhaps implied, but not overtly captured, is the aspect of employee engagement which is crucial in making public servants responsive to the realization of government projects. Implementation of government projects has met a myriad challenges that influence their successful implementation. WHO (2005) identified factors that affect the successful implementation of such programs as: national planning, political factors and capacity; availability of data about the target population and project impacts; influence of socio-economic factors and special considerations regarding the age of target population; communication strategies through varied media to reach all stakeholders and beneficiaries; and engagement of all levels of the society (from government to individual) in the process. It is this factor of engagement, particularly of the civil servants involved in the implementation of projects that this study seeks to investigate.

2.2.2 Organizational outcomes

Studies have shown that employee engagement has a correlation with organizational outcomes. Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) illustrates the importance of engagement on business levels. They connected employee engagement with outcomes, which are directly relevant to most businesses namely customer satisfaction, profitability, employee turnover, productivity and safe environment.

2.3 Characteristics of Engaged employees

In this subsection, the study reviews literature related to factors and characteristics of employee engagement. The defining distinction is that employee engagement is a two-

way interaction between the employee and the employer, whereas the earlier focus tended to view the issues from only the employee's point of view (Woodruffe, 2006). Definitions of engagement, or characteristics of an engaged workforce, focus on motivation, satisfaction, commitment, finding meaning at work, pride and advocacy of the organization (in terms of advocating/recommending either the products or services of the organization, or as a place to work). Additionally, having some connection to the organization's overall strategy and objectives and both wanting and being able to work to achieve them, are key elements of engagement. A recurring theme in the literature is the idea that engagement involves workers 'going the extra mile', and exerting discretionary effort over and above what is normally expected.

An engaged employee looks for, and is given, opportunities to improve organizational performance while keeping him/her up to-date with new developments in his/her field. He/she is positive about the job and the organization and believes in the organization. He/she works actively to make things better and treats others with respect, and helps colleagues to perform more effectively. He/she can be relied upon and goes beyond the requirements of the job. Sees the bigger picture even at personal cost and identifies with the organization (Robinson et al. 2004).

The factors that determine engagement are primarily driven by the organization, and it is the extent to which the organization takes these issues on board and addresses them in an effective manner that will influence engagement levels. Of course engagement is a two-way process and whilst engagement is organization-led, it requires inputs from the employee as well the employer. This study sought to explore how employees in the public

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2.4 Dimensions of Employee Engagement

Ellis and Sorenson (2007) endorse a two dimensional definition of engagement that defines an engaged employee as one who 1) knows what to do at work and 2) wants to do the work. It is their strong view that engagement should always be defined and assessed within the context of productivity, and that the two elements of engagement noted above are necessary for driving productivity.

The CIPD Annual Survey report (2006c) defines engagement in terms of three dimensions of employee engagement namely: Emotional engagement – being very involved emotionally in one’s work; cognitive engagement – focusing very hard whilst at work; and physical engagement – being willing to ‘go the extra mile’ for your employer. The survey report states that the very engaged go one step further and speak out as advocates of their organization, in what they describe as a ‘win-win’ situation for the employee and the employer.

Although the organization has primary responsibility for leading engagement, there are also secondary employee and job specific factors which can affect levels of engagement.

Robinson et al (2004) discuss these factors that determine engagement. These include modelling engagement, role of engagement in organizational outcomes, organizational variations and employee variations. These factors refer to the approach to employee engagement, discussed by Robinson et al (2004), stresses the importance of 'feeling valued and involved' as a key driver of engagement. Within this umbrella of feeling valued and involved there are a number of elements that have a varying influence on the extent to which the employee feel valued and involved and hence engaged. Robinson et al (2004) state that this can be a useful pointer to organizations towards those aspects of working life that require serious attention if engagement levels are to be maintained or improved. These four factors informed the current study with regard to the characteristics of employee engagement in the Directorate of Personnel management.

Penna (2007) presents a hierarchical model of engagement factors which illustrates the impact each level had on the attraction, engagement and retention of talent. In this context, Penna (2007) defines meaning at work as the situation where a job brings fulfilment for the employee, through the employee being valued, appreciated, having a sense of belonging and congruence with the organization and feel like they are making a contribution. In this model, as the hierarchy ascends and the organization successfully meets each of these engagement factors, the organization becomes more attractive to new potential employees and becomes more engaging to its existing staff.

Work by Schmidt (2004) frames engagement within the context of organizational health and Workplace Well-Being (WWB). Engagement is defined by Schmidt (2004) as the

overarching label that brings employee satisfaction and commitment together. This model highlights the importance of commitment to the job as driven by job satisfaction, and also notes the importance of the supportive organization. By creating the right conditions to generate high levels of employee engagement, the organization can drive high performance – with high performance being defined as the achievement of the overarching public sector goal of advancing the public good. The model depicts the flow of organizational dynamics that begins with recruitment and moves through support for work, to workplace well-being, to engagement and finally to high levels of organizational performance. Schmidt's model perhaps presents the closest definition of engagement in Kenya's public service as envisioned for this study.

In Schmidt's (2004) discussion, WWB itself is driven by commitment and job satisfaction, which in turn are determined by a number of factors. It is a similar idea to the model presented by Robinson et al (2004) where 'feeling valued and involved' was the key driver of engagement, but in turn was influenced to a varying degree by a range of factors. As is the case throughout much of the literature, Schmidt (2004) does not present a definitive list of the drivers of commitment and satisfaction (as the drivers of engagement) but reviews several studies and reports.

Previous studies on engagement have been carried out by various researchers and several surveys on the subject have also been done. The most comprehensive studies are from the Gallup organization's research using the Q12 instrument which has been adopted for

this study. It addresses the extent to which employees needs are being met and examines the emotional ties they have to their employment.

According to Coffman and Gonzale – Molina (2002), results of this Gallup research has shown that business units which employees score in the top half on employee engagement have an average of 50% higher success rate with customer loyalty and a 44% higher success rate on staff turnover.

May, Gilson and Harter (2004) also conducted a field study in a large Midwestern Insurance Agency using a survey format they employed why individuals fully engaged in their work while others became alienated or completely disengaged. The result of this study confirmed that engagement differs from simple job satisfaction. They agreed that engagement actually entail active use of emotions and behaviours in addition to cognitions. Overall study results supported Khan's earlier work in that psychological meaningfulness and safety were positively linked to employee investment in work roles.

Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) completed a meta-analysis of prior studies on employee engagement that were conducted by Gallup organization. The researchers examined the relationship between employee satisfaction, productivity, profit, employee turnover, and accidents. Harter (2002) noted that one of the defining elements of employee engagement is the actionable quality of the measured concepts. In other words, employee engagement is related to meaningful business outcomes and many of the core issues of engagement are ones over which managers can have substantial influence. High

levels of satisfaction and employee engagement were positively correlated with customer satisfaction, productivity, profitability and safety outcomes.

In my view, this literature review shows that employee engagement/disengagement is present in the workplace and is a concern. Studies on employee engagement clearly demonstrate that the benefits of having an engaged workforce outweigh those of disengaged ones (if there are any). Research indicates that by better understanding employee engagement, new strategies could be developed that would increase levels of employee engagement, thereby possibly increasing the costly negative effects of disengagement for employees. Employers, and especially Hr practitioners and line managers should be sensitised on the importance of employee engagement and areas to work on in order to have a fully engaged workforce. They should also know that the repercussions of having a disengage workforce are detrimental to the productivity of the organization and hence should be addressed today if not yesterday.

Unfortunately, research that examined staff engagement specifically in human resource field is extremely limited. Additional research is needed to further our knowledge of engagement in this field and to identify what the predictors and consequences of engagement might be. A thorough study of engagement in human resource field should lead to the development of specific strategies and interventions that could increase engagement for employees in other Ministries, departments or agencies in the public sector.

2.5 Concept of Work Productivity

Productivity has been generally defined as ratio of a measure of output to a measure of some or all of the resources used to produce this output. Productivity is the quantitative relationship between what we produce and the resources we use (Curries (1972). Productivity may be evaluated in terms of the output of an employee in a specific period of time. Typically, the productivity of a given worker was assessed relative to an average for employees doing similar work. Because much of the success of any organization relies upon the productivity of its workforce, employee productivity is an important consideration for businesses.

Work productivity in any given organization is dependent of various factors employee engagement included. Traditionally, productivity was measured based on standard hours compared to productive hours. It also compared output (goods and services) relative to the input (capital, labour, materials, energy and other resources) used to produce them. Today however many organizations are impressing on the need to engage their employees with an aim of achieving higher levels of performance. Therefore if you take the people (human resource) as the input and blend it with other factors of production, there will be positive outcome. There is however very little literature available that can clearly show the relationship between employee engagement and work productivity in the public sector.

2.5.1 Components of productivity

There are two very important concepts of evaluating productivity namely; efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency can be defined as the state or quality of being efficient, or able to accomplish something with the least waste of time and effort; competency in performance. The concept of efficiency presupposes an ability to identify a change in the productivity ratio. Managers are more likely to want to compare with their competitors and assess the scope there might be for improvement (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Efficiency takes this aspect of productivity into account and makes comparisons to some known potential. Once you have employees doing the right things, you can make sure they do things right. Examine all employee tasks and determine if there is a better way to get them done. For example, perhaps your order pickers spend most of their time walking through the warehouse looking for products. To give another example, your back-office personnel may be dictating to front-office salespeople how many orders they can handle. Find more efficient ways to get work done through computerization, streamlined communication channels and rearranging of the physical environment.

Effectiveness is the degree to which objectives are achieved; and the extent to which targeted problems are solved. In contrast to efficiency, effectiveness is determined without reference to costs and, whereas efficiency means "doing the thing right effectiveness means doing the right thing (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007).

Effectiveness must come first in all of your considerations about productivity. Effectiveness is doing the right things. You must make sure that all your objectives serve

your goals, which in turn serve your purpose. Objectives are short-term achievements, goals are long-term achievements, and your purpose is serving customers in ways that satisfy their needs and desires. Start by looking at whether you are doing the right things, and whether you are asking employees to do the right things. For example, if you are a manufacturer, ask yourself whether all employee tasks contribute to manufacturing, or whether some tasks, such as washing company vehicles or ordering lunch for staff, are irrelevant. Make sure your employees engage in activities that are effective in moving you toward your goals.

2.6 Effects of Employee Engagement on Employee Productivity

Employee engagement /disengagement affect productivity in that employees respond to work situations according to the relationships established between the managers and the subordinates. If the manager involves the employees at all levels of management, then they adapt a culture of teamwork. Once the employees are given room for innovation, and creative thinking, they become committed to their work and own the results of their work. Engagement results to healthy competition among the employees which leads to high performance hence high productivity and profitability. Salanova, *et al.* (2005), Hakanen, *et al.* (2006) and Hallberg and Schaufeli & Baker (2004) concur with Harter *et al.*'s findings that employee engagement could be a predictor of organizational success, as it seems to have the potential to affect employee retention, employee loyalty and productivity, customer satisfaction which results to positive business outcomes.

To engage workers as well as to benefit from that engagement, an organization must invest in its human resource practices. Woodruffe, (2006) asserts that employee engagement builds upon and goes further than 'commitment' and 'motivation' in the management of programmes and organizational goals. Rafferty et al (2005) indicate that it originated from the concept of employee engagement has as its foundation in employee commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour. These behaviours include voluntarily helping of others, such as assisting those who have fallen behind in their work, and identifying and stopping work-related problems in the first place. As these types of behaviour are not normally part of their ward system, absence of such behaviours is therefore not punishable by the organization but performance of them should lead to effective running of it.

Employees who are engaged with their job and employer are more productive because they are motivated beyond personal factors (Keenan, 2016). They are more focused and more motivated than their disengaged counterparts. This means they work more efficiently and with the success of the organisation in mind. Harter *et al.* (2009) conducted a meta-analysis encompassing 199 research studies across 152 organisations in 44 industries and 26 countries. They statistically calculated the available data on business/work unit level relationship between employee engagement and performance outcomes within in each study. The studies covered 32,394 business/work units and 955,905 employees (Harter *et al.* 2009). Their findings quantified significant differences between business units ranking in the top and bottom 25% on engagement. They found an 18% drop in productivity between the top and bottom performers. Additionally, there was

a 60% drop in quality (measured by defects in products). Similarly, a study into Fortune 100 companies conducted by Gonring, (2008) found that there was a dramatic 1,000 percent increase in errors among disengaged versus engaged employee populations. Research consistently shows that low levels of employee engagement are detrimental to performance. In fact, it has been found that employees that are highly engaged are twice as likely to be top performers (Taleo Research, 2009).

Saks (2006) found a distinction between two types of engagement, job engagement and organisation engagement, which he argues are related but distinct constructs. In addition, he argued that the relationships between both job and organisation engagement, and their antecedents and consequences differed in a number of ways, suggesting that the psychological conditions that lead to job and organization engagement, as well as their consequences, is not the same. Whilst this study has provided anew insight into employee engagement, it is important to note the survey did not specify the consequence of employee productivity. Therefore, the results may not be generalisable to employees in Kenya.

Nevertheless, practitioners and academics tend to agree that the consequences of employee engagement are positive (Saks 2006). There is a general belief that there is a connection between employee engagement and business results; a meta-analysis conducted by Harter *et al* (2002:272) confirms this connection. They concluded that, “employee satisfaction and engagement are related to meaningful business outcomes at a magnitude that is important to many organisations”. However, engagement is an

individual-level construct and if it does lead to business results, it must first impact individual-level outcomes. Therefore, there is reason to expect employee engagement is related to individuals' attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. This study, despite providing a measure of employee productivity as is perceived in the present study, does not actually identify employee productivity per se as is clearly defined in the present study.

The Gallup Organisation (2004) found critical links between employee engagement, customer loyalty, business growth and profitability. They compared the scores of these variables among a sample of stores scoring in the top 25 per cent on employee engagement and customer loyalty with those in the bottom 25 per cent. Stores in the bottom 25 per cent significantly under-performed across three productivity measures: sales, customer complaints and turnover. In an extension of the Gallup findings, Ott (2007) cites Gallup research, which found that higher workplace engagement predicts higher earnings per share (EPS) among publicly-traded businesses. When compared with industry competitors at the company level, organisations with more than four engaged employees for every one actively disengaged, experienced 2.6 times more growth in EPS than did organisations with a ratio of slightly less than one engaged worker for every one actively disengaged employee. The findings can be considered as reliable as the variability in differing industries was controlled by comparing each company to its competition, and the patterns across time for EPS were explored due to a 'bouncing' increase or decrease which is common in EPS (Ott 2007). The current study also examined the level of engagement of employees but went ahead to link it to productivity within the context of a public institution.

2.7 Employee engagement in Government

In this subsection, the review concerns the role of employees in achieving organizational goals and their engagement in projects and programmes meant to achieve these goals. While leaders play an integral role in the performance of organizations, change cannot be driven solely from the top down (Robinson et al, 2004). According to the US federal public service (2012), leaders in successful organizations engage their employees and encourage them to make frontline decisions. Government needs to do the same to better serve the American public. For the federal government, employee engagement remains a core challenge. Formal systems and structures have led to a culture where employees seem to feel the need to ask for permission to make even the smallest change. The Partnership's rankings measure employee satisfaction and commitment, key elements of engagement. Employees are especially dissatisfied with their level of empowerment on work processes, their involvement in decisions that affect their work and the degree of information sharing from top management about what is going on in their organizations.

According to the Australian public service Commission (2012), the APS Employee Engagement Model offers the Australian Public Service (APS) a comprehensive, multi-dimensional understanding of the engagement of its employees. It has the potential to explore links between employee engagement and organizational productivity through employee performance and availability factors, including the use of sick leave, employee intention to leave their agency and hours worked. A more complete understanding of employee engagement and its consequences gives APS managers and HR practitioners

the ability to better develop and implement strategies to improve employee engagement and thereby workforce productivity.

Regarding the impact of engagement, the Scottish Public Service (2007) provides evidence available and several case study examples of organizations across the private and public sector. The impact of engagement (or disengagement) can manifest itself through productivity and organizational performance, outcomes for customers of the organization, employee retention rates, organizational culture, and advocacy of the organization and its external image. Whilst there are several caveats to some of the results, it is clear that some of the major employers in the UK (Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) and the NHS for example) are taking employee engagement seriously and are actively implementing measures to assess the extent of engagement within an organization usually achieved through an employee survey. However, the real value in such a survey lies in the extent to which the results are used as a basis to identify the organization's strengths and weaknesses so that the necessary corrective actions can be taken. Although none of the literature covered explicitly referenced a monitoring framework, several methods to continually observe and measure engagement level were noted and included recurring surveys, focus groups, online communication, and in the case of RBS, an extensive human capital model. These views regarding employee engagement go a long way at informing the study regarding government engagement of its employees.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

2.7.1 Social Exchange Theory

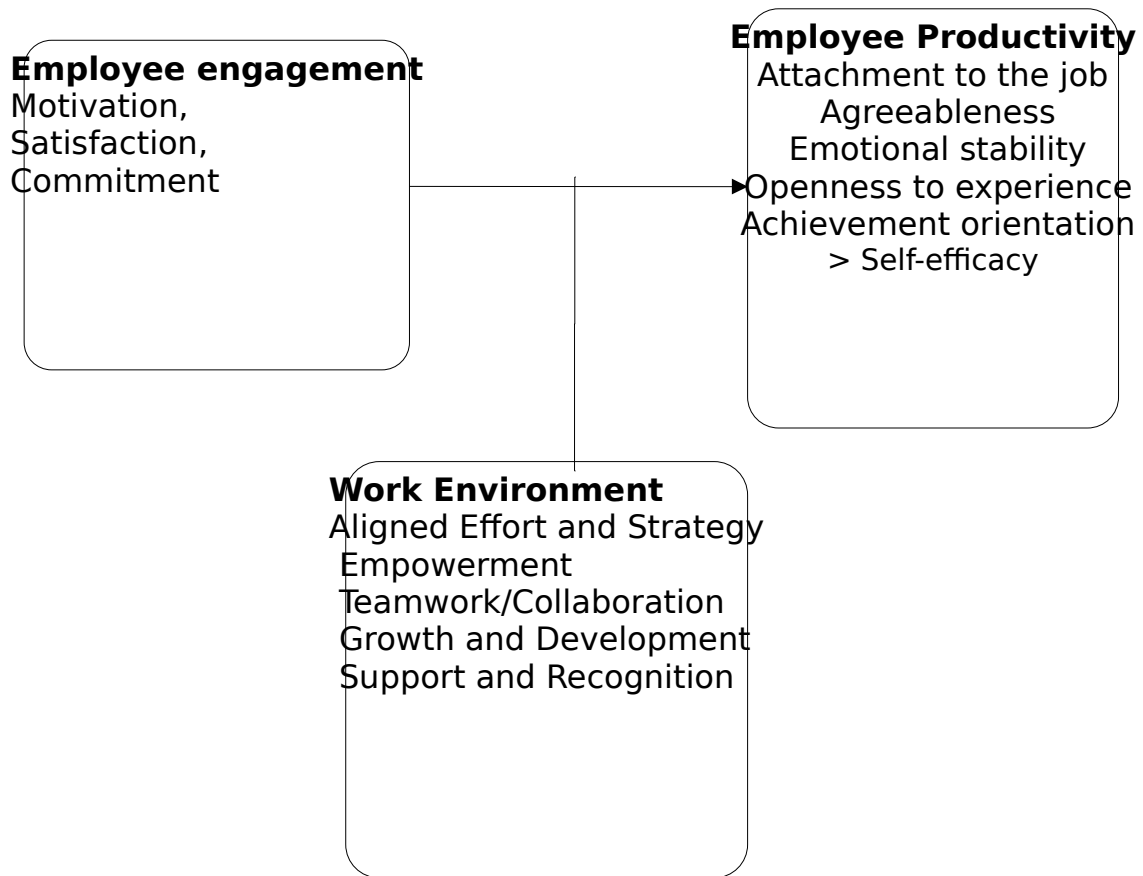
This study adopted the Social Exchange Theory as propagated by (Cropanzano, Rupp and Bryne, 2003). The exchange theory views employment relationship as consisting of social or economic exchanges (Cropanzano, Rupp and Bryne, 2003). Economic exchange relationships involve the exchange of economic benefits in return for employees' efforts and are often dependent on formal contracts which are legally enforceable. On the other hand, social exchanges are 'voluntary actions' which may be initiated by an organization's treatment of its employees, with the expectation that the employees be obligated to reciprocate the good deeds of the organization (Gould and Davies, 2005).

The exchange approach view of organizational commitment\ engagement posits that individuals attach themselves to their organizations in return for certain rewards from the organizations. According to this view, employees enter the organization with specific skills, desires and goals, and expect to find an environment where they can use their skills, satisfy their desires and achieve their goals. Perception of favourable exchange/ rewards from the employees' view point is expected to result in increased engagement to the organization. On the other hand, failure by the organization to provide sufficient rewards in exchange for employees' efforts is likely to result in decreased organizational engagement. From this perspective, social –exchange theory suggests that employees respond to perceived favourable working conditions by behaving in ways that benefit the organization and /or other employees. Equally, employees retaliate against dissatisfying

conditions by engaging in negative work attitudes such as absenteeism, lateness, or preparing to quit the organization (Crede et al. 2007).

The exchange theory has also been used to explain the employees' attitudinal engagement to the organization. According to the exchange perspective, employees exchange their identification, loyalty and attachment to the organization, in return for incentives from the organization. This implies that an individual's decision to become and remain a member of an organization is determined by their perception of the fairness of the balance of organizational inducements and the employee contribution. Meyer and Smith (2000) argue that unless employees believe they have been treated fairly, they may not be committed to the organization.

2.2.8 Conceptual framework



This conceptual framework shows the relationship between the independent variable (employee engagement) and the dependent variable (employee productivity) functioning within the confines of an intervening variable (the work environment) the independent variable is characterized by motivation, satisfaction and commitment as measures of employee engagement. These aspects of employee engagement was realized within the context of the work environment which is characterized by the drivers of employee engagement namely aligned effort and strategy, empowerment, teamwork and collaboration, growth and development, and support and recognition. The result of the

engagement is employee productivity characterized by attachment to the job, agreeableness, emotional stability, openness to experience, and achievement orientation.

Motivation and Engagement

Many managers mistakenly think that employee satisfaction can increase employee motivation. An American psychologist **Frederick Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory** proposes that people are influenced by two factors: those that impact motivation and basic factors that influence job satisfaction. Motivation factors include challenging work, recognition, and responsibility. Hygiene factors consist of pay and benefits, supervision, working conditions, and job security (among others).

Hygiene factors determine a person's level of satisfaction with their job and strongly influence employee retention. If they are not met, they lead to job dissatisfaction and cause employees to look for better opportunities elsewhere. However, the addition of more or better hygiene factors over a certain baseline will not increase job satisfaction or performance.

Commitment and Employee Engagement

Commitment is both a willingness to persist in a course of action and reluctance to change plans, often owing to a sense of obligation to stay the course. People are simultaneously committed to multiple entities, such as economic, educational, familial, political and religious institutions. Commitment manifests itself in distinct behavior. For example, people devote time and energy to fulfill their on-the-job responsibilities as well as their family, personal, community and spiritual obligations. Commitment also has an

emotional component: People usually experience and express positive feelings toward an entity or individual to whom they have made a commitment. Finally, commitment has a rational element: Most people consciously decide to make commitments, then they thoughtfully plan and carry out the actions required to fulfill them, .Robert J. Vanice, (2004).

Job Satisfaction and Employee Engagement

An employee can be satisfied with a job without being engaged in the job. [Employee engagement](#) is much more than being content with pay and the ability to leave at 3 pm. That contentedness is merely job satisfaction, and though satisfaction is generally enough to retain employees, it's not enough to ensure productivity. On the other hand, employee engagement does promote increased productivity.

An engaged employee is an employee who is deeply involved and invested in their work. The factors that drive employee engagement, however, are different than those that drive satisfaction. [Engagement factors include Meaning, Autonomy, Growth, Impact, and Connection](#). Employee satisfaction is the foundation upon which employee engagement can grow and thrive.

Organizations with genuinely engaged employees have higher retention, productivity, customer satisfaction, innovation, and quality. They also require less training time, experience less illness, and have fewer accidents. In my view, Motivation, Commitment and job satisfaction do not necessarily lead to employee engagement and therefore

Herzbergs theory may only apply to few cases. In addition, different employees are motivated by different rewards. There are those who are contented with financial rewards while others are motivated by non-financial rewards. Others would want a mix of the two so that they can feel fully motivated. It is therefore imperative that organizations look all themes of employee engagement so that they fully understand how well to engage their employees.

These themes lead to employee productivity because employees have an attachment to their jobs, there is agreement between the supervisor and the employee on how to improve performance hence emotional stability. Employees also become open to experience where there is increased innovation and creativity. This helps the employee to feel a sense of achievement and orientation. This can only be achieved if there is aligned effort and strategy, teamwork and collaboration among all the employees at all levels. Employees on the other hand realize growth and development in their careers as they gain support and recognition from their managers and the entire organization. When all these elements are put in place in an organization, then we can say that employees in such organizations are engaged

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This section covers the research design, target population, sample and sampling procedures, sample size, instruments for data collection, reliability and validity of the research instruments, as well as procedure for data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

This was a case study and hence employed the survey research design. The researcher selected this design because it's a valuable tool for assessing opinions and trends hence suitable for this study. The study adopted the Gallup survey tool which has been used worldwide to measure employee engagement in various aspects.

3.3 Location of the Study

This study was carried out at the Ministry of Devolution and Planning headquarters. The study was limited in scope because the researcher could not cover all the units of the Ministry of Devolution and Planning including the 47 counties due to constraint in time and finances. Furthermore, this study could not extend to the counties since the researcher was concerned with the Ministry Headquarters as they are the policy makers.

3.4 Target Population

The target population for this study was employees at all levels in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning. Respondents were drawn from the various directorates in the Ministry Headquarters as shown in the sampling frame below:

Table 3.1: Sampling Frame

Directorate	No of staff N=1300	Sample (10%) 10% xn	Cumulative total of sample
Special Programmes	200	20	20
Directorate of Public Service Management	400	40	60
Arid and Semi Arid Lands	200	20	80
Directorate of Planning	200	20	100
Directorate of Youth Affairs	220	22	122
Directorate of Gender	80	8	130
Total	1300	130	

Source: Researcher, (2016)

3.5 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The researcher used simple random sampling since there is specific groups of people that formed part of the target population. While the target respondents was 130, the study sampled 2 senior staff from each directorate who were regarded as a suitable unit of analysis since they are the policy makers, middle level managers 60 (10 people from each directorate) since they are the implementers of Government projects including engagement and productivity. The rest of the respondents were sampled respective to the

10% sampling procedure adopted for this study. The sample included a stratified sample of staff from all levels of the organization.

3.6 Sample Size

The researcher administered semi-structured questionnaires to senior managers and 118 members of staff from each of the 6 directorates. This constituted a study sample of 130 respondents representing 10% of the total staff in the Ministry headquarters. Kothari (2004) argues that 10 % to 20% of accessible population is acceptable in a descriptive research. Hence, 130 respondents were adequately representative of the total population of respondents since it is considered to be statistically logical and practicable by the researcher.

3.7 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

This study used open ended and closed ended questionnaire which was piloted and tested on the same population before being formerly distributed to the same population. The questionnaire was a 5-point Likert scale type designed to capture the measures and levels of employee engagement and productivity. The questionnaire contained 21 questions divided into three sections each capturing an aspect of employee engagement in the organization. The aspects of engagement included emotional engagement, cognitive engagement and physical engagement.

3.8 Data Analysis Procedure

The data collected was ordered and coded on the basis of the variables of the study. The data was analyzed for identification of employee engagement characteristics and its effect on employee performance. Data collected was analyzed using both descriptive statistics. The descriptive data was analyzed in tables and charts to show the employee engagement strategies adopted by the ministry and the characteristics of employee productivity as they emanate from the data. Further, the study analyzed the correlation between employee engagement and employee satisfaction as a measure of employee productivity. Data was exposed to SPSS and calculation of the mean, median and standard deviations were done to establish the level of significance indices for each variable.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The researcher was careful not to cause physical or psychological harm to respondents by asking embarrassing and irrelevant questions, threatening language or making respondents nervous. Similarly, ethical considerations such as confidentiality, anonymity and avoidance of deception were put into the fore. For the purpose of this study, permission was sought from relevant authorities and a letter granted to allow carrying out the research. At the same time relevant permission was sought from the Ministry of Devolution and Planning, National Council for Science and Technology and from the County Government of Nairobi to conduct research. All works of different authors that have been used for this study have been acknowledged.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Overview

In this chapter, the findings of the study are presented and analysed. The chapter first examines the return rate and then the respondents' bio data. The quantitative data is presented with regard to the objectives of the study and the analysis done in tables and charts. The descriptive statistics are then used to determine the correlation that exists between the variables of employee engagement and employee productivity.

4.2 Return Rate

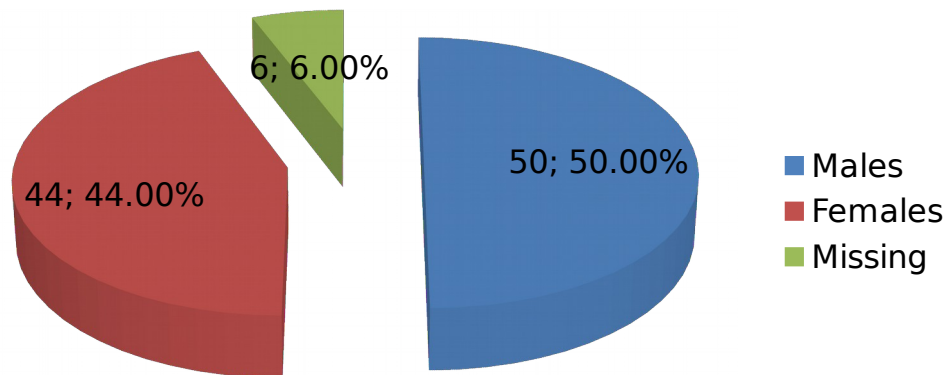
The researcher issued questionnaires to 130 respondents. Twelve were issued to senior managers and 118 issued to other employees. However, 8 respondents out of the 118 did not answer the questionnaires. The unanswered questionnaires represented 6.2% of the total number of respondents. Therefore the response rate was 93% which was good enough to make conclusions from.

4.3 Respondent's Bio Data

The study sought to establish various aspects of respondents' bio data. First, the study sought to establish the age and gender of the respondents. The employee's bio data helped the researcher to establish for example, establish the number of years the respondents have worked in the Ministry to qualify to respond to the research questions. Gender was also important to ensure parity in both male and female and also to avoid bias. The level

of education was equally important as it helped the researcher to know whether the respondents clearly understood the concepts being evaluated. These are presented in table 1 and 2.

Figure 4.1: Gender of respondents



Source: Author (2016)

Figure 4.1 shows the gender of the respondents. Data showed that there was parity between the male and female respondents with the males slightly more than the females at 50% and 44% respectively. There were 6% of the respondents who did not respond to this question hence registering missing data.

Further, the study sought to establish the ages of the respondents. The findings in this regard are presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Age range of respondents

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Under 24 years	10	9.0	10	10
25 -34 years	10	9.0	10	20
35 -44 years	42	38.1	42.0	62.0
Over 50 years	38	34.5	38.0	100.0
Total	100	90.6	100.0	
Missing	10	9.4		
Total	110	100.0		

Source: Researcher, 2016

The data in table 4.1 shows that the majority of respondents (72.6%) were aged between 35 and 60 years. Of this number, 38.1% were aged between 35 and 44 years while 34.5% were aged over 50 years. Those aged below 34 years constituted a cumulative 18% of the total study sample. This means that the respondents had enough working experience to respond confidently and authoritatively on the subject of the study. This fact is further confirmed by the number of years the respondents had worked for the ministry as presented in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Work experience in the public sector

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid Below 5 years	17	15.4	15.0	14.9
6-10 years	42	38.1	39.4	54.1
10-15 years	23	20.9	21.1	75.9
Over 15 years	26	23.6	24.5	100.0
Total	108	98.0	100.0	
Missing	2	2.0		
Total	110	100.0		

Source: Researcher, 2016

Data in table 4.2 shows that the majority of respondents (38.1%) had worked in the ministry for 6 to 10 years; 20.9% had worked for 10 to 15 years; and 23.6 had worked for over 15 years. This makes a cumulative total of 82.6% of respondents who had worked in the ministry for more than 6 years. Only 15% had worked for below 5 years.

The study also sought to establish the respondents' level of education as part of the bio data. The findings in this regard are presented in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Level of education

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Valid	Secondary	3	2.7	2.8	2.8
	College	31	28.1	28.9	31.8
	University	73	66.3	68.2	100.0
	Total	107	97.1	100.0	
Missing		3	2.9		
Total		110	100		

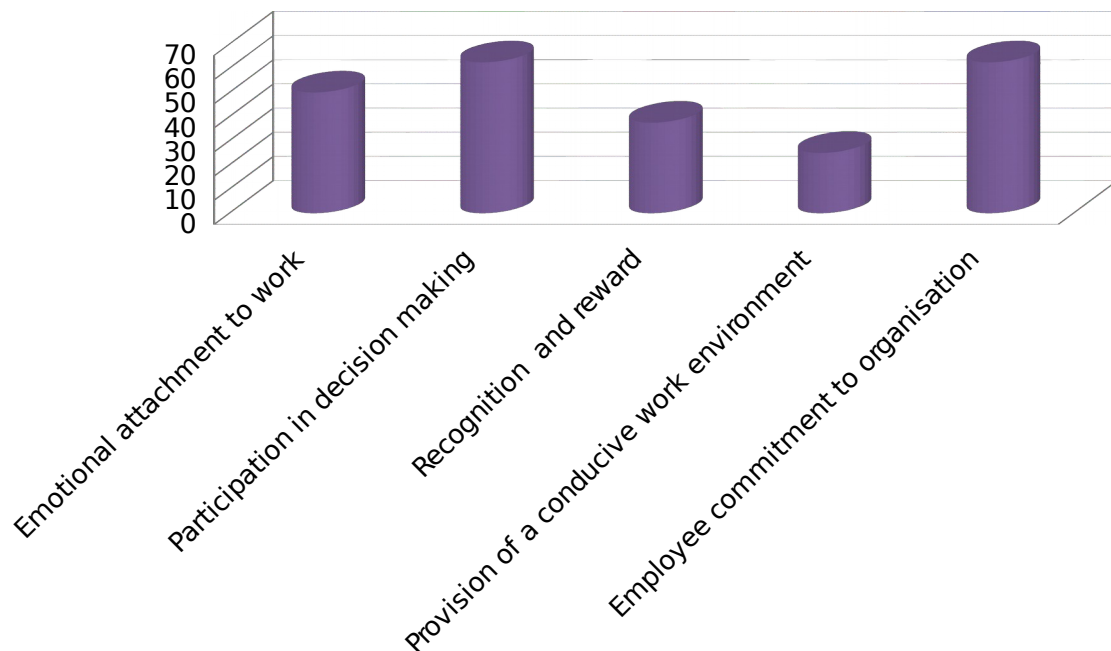
Source: Researcher, 2016

Data in table 4.3 shows that the majority of employees in the ministry of devolution had attained university education. These constituted 68% of the sample population while those who had attained college level education accounted for 28% of the sample population. The ones with university degrees were mostly those in specialised areas such as accounts, finance, ICT and middle level management staff. College graduates constituted the clerical staff and administrative assistants. Only 2% had secondary school education. These were the lowest cadre of staff in the ministry. This distribution is confirmed in table 4 which shows the responses with regard to the various departments that respondents worked in.

4.4 Effects of employee engagement on productivity

The aspect of employee engagement and its effect on employee productivity constituted the first objective of the study. In order to elicit data with regard to this objective, the researcher sought the opinion of respondents regarding various aspects of employee engagement and productivity, especially from the senior staff in the Ministry of Devolution. To start with, the study sought to establish the respondents' understanding of the concept of employee engagement. The findings in this regard are presented in fig. 2.

Figure 4.2: Employee Engagement Perceptions



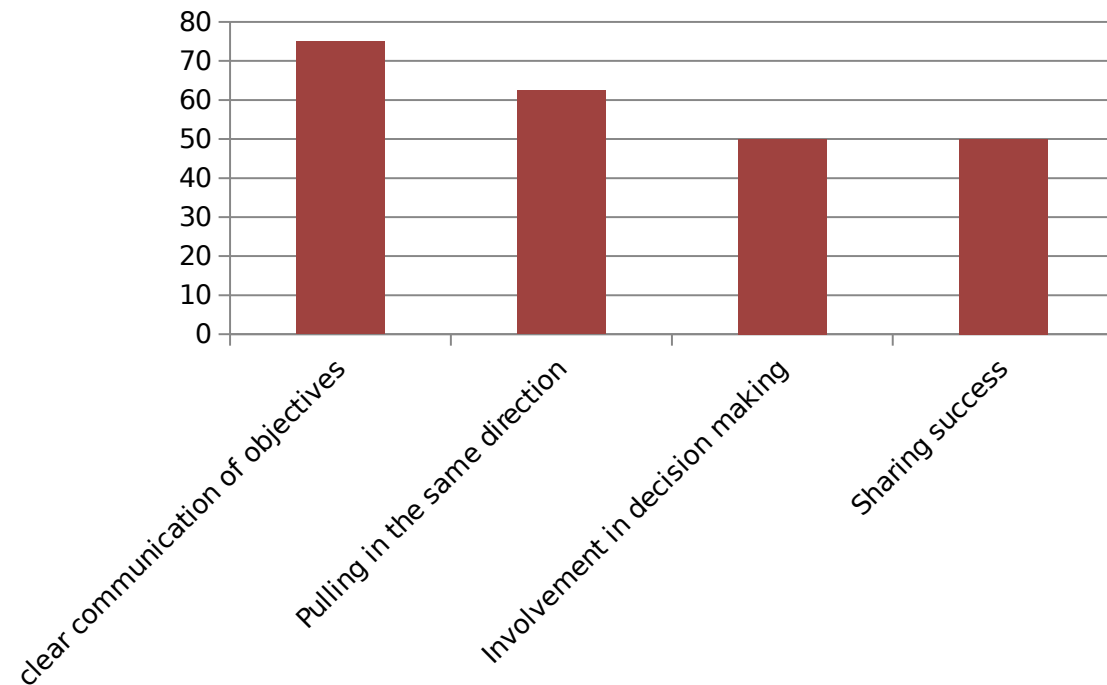
Source: Researcher, (2016)

Data in figure 4.2 shows respondents' perception of employee engagement in the ministry of Devolution. According to the data, the majority of respondents (62.5%) view employee engagement as employee participation in decision making and their subsequent

commitment to the organization. Fifty% felt that employee engagement was the emotional attachment the employees had to their work; 37.5% viewed employee engagement as recognition and reward; and 25% saw it as provision of a conducive work environment. This findings seem to confirm the assertion by Robinson et al.(2004) that employee engagement is a two-way process involving both the organization and inputs from the employee as well the employer. Evidently, emotional attachment and employee commitment are employee related aspects while participation, recognition and conducive environment are within the domain of the management of the organization to create.

All the respondents agreed that they believed in employee engagement and that it does affect employee productivity. However, when asked the extent to which they allowed their employees to participate in decision making three of the respondents indicated that they did most of the time, while 5 respondents indicated that they sometimes engaged their employees in decision making. When asked how they ensured that ministry employees had a shared vision, respondents gave their views as shown in figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: How employees share the Ministry's vision



Source: Researcher, (2016)

Data in figure 4.3 shows the ways through which employees at the Ministry of Devolution share in the ministry's vision. Of the respondents, 75% indicated that shared vision was achieved through clear communication objectives; 62.5% indicated that the vision is shared through pulling in the same direction; while 50% identified involvement in decision making and sharing success as ways of sharing the organizations vision. These findings affirm the assertion by Schmidt (2004) with regard to employee engagement as the overarching label that brings employee satisfaction and commitment together. Schmidt highlights the importance of commitment to the job as driven by job satisfaction, and also notes the importance of the supportive organization. This is perhaps best achieved through a shared vision for the organization as evidenced by the findings above. When asked whether or not they allow for feedback, all the respondents (100%) indicated that they did provide for feedback from employees. Moreover, all the

respondents indicated that employees of the Ministry of Devolution exhibited characteristics of engagement.

The study then sought to establish from the respondents the effect of employee engagement on productivity. To achieve this, the researcher analysed the responses from the Likert scale type questionnaire based on the two variables of employee engagement (question 1 – 10) and employee productivity (question 11 – 20). The measures of employee engagement used in the questionnaire are derived from the definition of engagement provided by The CIPD Annual Survey report (2006c) which defines engagement in terms of three dimensions of employee engagement namely: Emotional engagement – being very involved emotionally in one's work; Cognitive engagement – focusing very hard whilst at work; and Physical engagement – being willing to 'go the extra mile' for your employer. The measure of employee productivity is derived from Woodruffe's, (2006) assertion that the result of employee engagement is realized in various employee behaviours. These behaviours lead to effective running of the organisation.

Table 4.5: Employee engagement in the Ministry of Devolution

Employee engagement levels			Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Total
Emotional engagement	There is trust and respect for leadership	Count %	20 18.18	14 12.72	76 69.09	110 100
	Individual and team accomplishments are celebrated	Count %	56 50.9	38 34.54	17 15.45	110 100
	There is openness to change and new ideas	Count %	62 56.26	24 21.87	24 21.87	110 100
	I am appreciated and rewarded so I take pride in my work and put in extra effort when it's needed.	Count %	41 37.50	28 25.00	41 37.50	110 100
	I work with confidence towards corporate goals	Count %	17 15.45	20 18.75	73 65.64	110 100
	I enjoy my work and can focus on the job and the bigger picture.	Count %	17 15.45	17 15.45	76 68.78	110 100
	Employees are encouraged to get involved in goal setting	Count %	31 28.18	34 30.90	45 40.92	110 100
	Employees are treated as individuals and their views and ideas are sought and contributions valued	Count %	45 40.90	24 21.87	41 37.50	110 100
	Development of employee skills, knowledge and abilities	Count %	17 15.45	31 28.18	62 56.36	110 100
	Anticipating and meeting customer needs	Count %	20 18.18	24 21.81	62 56.36	110 100
	The Ministry is committed to help me develop my skills and make progress in a clear career path	Count %	17 15.45	31 28.18	62 56.26	110 100

Cognitive engagement	The Ministry provides resources for me to do my job well.	Count %	20 18.18	24 21.87	65 59.09	110 100
	We run our day-to-day activities well and learn, adapt and improve and are positive to change	Count %	34 30.90	10 9.09	65 59.09	110 100
Physical engagement	I feel that I influence what the Ministry does so I have a bigger personal stake and care more about its success.	Count %	24 21.81	34 30.90	52 47.27	110 100
	The Ministry recognizes my personal needs therefore I am here for it.	Count %	28 25.00	10 31.25	14 43.75	32 100
	I am proud to work at the Ministry and desire to play my part to keep that reputation.	Count %	17 15.45	8 25.00	19 59.38	32 100
	The pay and benefits fairly reflect the value of the work	Count %	18 56.26	14 12.50	10 31.24	32 100
	I do my job well because my views are heard and taken seriously.	Count %	16 50.00	9 28.13	7 21.87	32 100

Source: Researcher, 2016

Data in tables 4.5 shows the responses with regard to employee engagement in the Ministry of devolution. The results show that employees in the Ministry are engaged more emotionally and physically than cognitively. The significance of this difference is however not too significant. With regard to emotional engagement, the majority of respondents (69.09%) indicated that there was trust and respect for leadership; while 68.78% indicated that they enjoyed their work and focused on organizational goals. However, 56% and 50% indicated that there was lack of openness to new ideas and that individual and team efforts were not adequately recognized. Despite this, the higher proportion of employees indicated they were emotionally engaged at work.

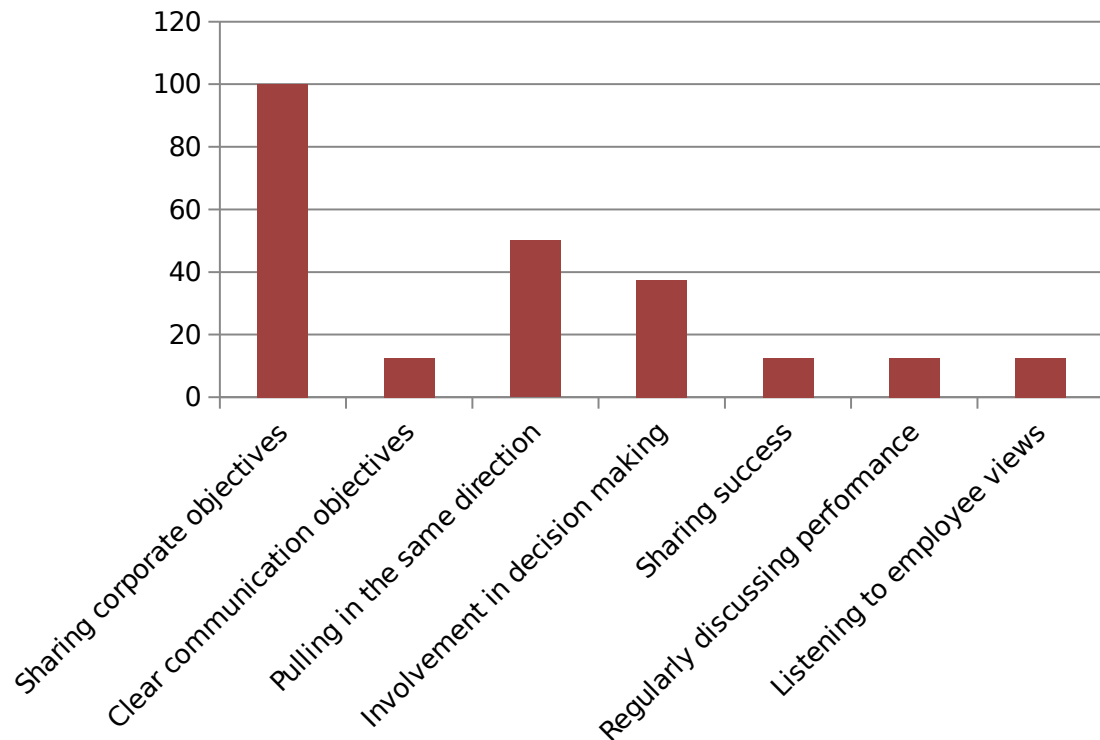
With regard to cognitive engagement, more than half the employees indicated that they were cognitively engaged at work. Ten questions on the Likert scale type questionnaire captured responses with regard to engagement while 10 questions captured responses with regard to productivity. In terms of anticipating and meeting customer needs, 56.36% of the respondents were satisfied; 56.26% indicated that the Ministry was committed to helping them develop my skills and make progress in a clear career path; while 59.09% indicated that the ministry provided resources for them to do their job well.

With regard to physical engagement, data showed that most employees were willing to go an extra mile in their work at the Ministry. Of the respondents, 59.09% indicated that they run their day-to-day activities well and learn, adapt and improve and are positive to change; 47.27% showed that they influence what the Ministry does so they had a bigger personal stake and cared more about its success; 43.75% indicated that the Ministry recognized their personal needs therefore they were willing to sacrifice more for it; while 59.38 indicated that they were proud to work at the Ministry and desire to play their part to keep that reputation. However, only 31.24% were satisfied that their pay and benefits fairly reflect the value of the work they did; and 21.87% were satisfied they did their job well because their views are heard and taken seriously. This finding corroborates the one made earlier on emotional engagement where respondents were dissatisfied with the level of acceptance of their views. The findings in this regard corroborate the assertions made by Shuck, (2011), that engagement, which has been identified as a distinct construct worthy of attention by both academics and practitioners, involves individual employee's emotional, cognitive and behavioural state directed toward designed organizational outcomes.

4.5 The process of employee engagement in the public sector

The study sought to establish the various modes of employee engagement in the Ministry of devolution. This aspect constituted the second objective of the study. In order to collect data in this regard, the researcher sought the views of the senior management staff on how they engaged the employees at the Ministry. The findings in this regard are presented in figure 2.

Figure 4.4: Modes of employee engagement



Source: Researcher,(2016)

Data in figure 4.4 shows that all the respondents indicated that sharing corporate objectives was the agreed mode of employee engagement. Pulling in the same direction (50%) and involving employees in decision making (37.5%) were indicated as the next most common modes of employee engagement. Clear communication of objectives, sharing success, regularly discussing performance, and listening to employee views each constituted 12.5%. This finding corroborates the assertion by Mokaya and Kipyegon (2014) that employee engagement involves creating prospect for human resources to attach with their managers, colleagues and organization. By identifying pulling in the same direction (synergy) and involvement in decision making, the respondents clearly

show that employee engagement means creating an attachment with the organization. This fact also captures Kahn (1990) in his description of engagement as the harnessing of organizational members to their work role where employees express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during the role performance. The findings from employees capture this aspect as shown in table 4.5.

4.5 Levels of Employee Engagement

This aspect constituted the third objective of the study. These include: Engaged - employees who work with passion and feel a profound connection to their organization. They drive innovation and move the organization forward; not engaged – employees who attend and participate at work but are timeserving and put no passion or energy into their work; and disengaged – employees who are unhappy at work and who act out their unhappiness at work. Hence employee engagement was characterized according to CIPD (2006) model of employee engagement as emotional engagement, cognitive engagement and physical engagement. The measurement of engagement level was done according to Meere's (2005), levels of employee engagement as engaged, not engaged and disengaged. Respondents were required to select on a five point Likert scale the extent to which they agreed with the statements (1= strongly dissatisfied, 2=dissatisfied, 3=neutral, 4=satisfied and 5=completely satisfied). The descriptive statistics for employee engagement are below.

Table 4.6: Levels of employee engagement

Emotional engagement	Dissatisfied		Neutral		Satisfied		Engagement level
	% resp	Av %	% resp	Av %	% resp	Av %	
There is trust and respect for leadership	18.18	32.63	12.72	22.0	69.09	41.34	Engaged
Individual and team accomplishments are celebrated	50.9		34.54		15.45		
There is openness to change and new ideas	56.26		21.87		21.87		
I am appreciated and rewarded so I take pride in my work and put in extra effort when it's needed.	37.50		25.00		37.50		
I work with confidence towards corporate goals	15.45		18.75		65.64		
I enjoy my work and can focus on the job and the bigger picture.	15.45		15.45		68.78		
Employees are encouraged to get involved in goal setting	28.18		30.90		40.92		
Employees are treated as individuals and their views and ideas are sought and contributions valued	40.90		21.87		37.50		
Cognitive engagement							
Development of employee skills, knowledge and abilities	15.45	19.5	28.18	22.8	56.36	55.3	Engaged
Anticipating and meeting customer needs	18.18		21.81		56.36		
The Ministry is committed to help me develop my skills and make progress in a clear career path	15.45		28.18		56.26		
The Ministry provides resources for me to do my job well.	18.18		21.87		59.09		
We run our day-to-day activities well and learn, adapt and improve and are positive to change	30.90		9.09		59.09		
I feel that I influence what the Ministry does so I have a bigger personal stake and care more about its success.	21.81		30.90		47.27		
Physical engagement							
The Ministry recognizes my personal needs therefore I am here for it.	25.00	36.5	31.25	24.0	43.75	38.5	Not engaged
I am proud to work at the Ministry and desire to play my part to keep that reputation.	15.45		25.00		59.38		
The pay and benefits fairly reflect the value of the work	56.26		12.50		31.24		
I do my job well because my views are heard and taken seriously.	50.00		28.13		21.87		

Source: Researcher, 2016

Data in table 4.6 shows that employees of the Ministry of Devolution were engaged emotionally and cognitively and not engaged physically. According to the data, an average of 41.3% of the employees was satisfied with the level of emotional engagement while 32.63% were dissatisfied and 22% were neutral. With regard to cognitive engagement, 55.3% were satisfied with the level of engagement while 19% were dissatisfied and 22.8% remained neutral in this regard. However, with regard to physical engagement, 36.5% were dissatisfied with the level of engagement while a corresponding 38.5% were satisfied with the level of engagement and 24% remained neutral. The proximity in numbers between those who were satisfied, the neutral and those who were dissatisfied suggests that a greater number of respondents were not engaged. Consequently, we can conjecture that employees in the Ministry of Devolution are engaged employees though to an average level. This finding is corroborated through the descriptive statistics presented in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Employee Engagement Levels

Employee engagement		Mean	Media n	Mode	Std. Deviation	Variance	Range	Min	Max
Emotional engagement	There is trust and respect for leadership	3.43	4.00	4	.888	.788	4	1	5
	Individual and team accomplishments are celebrated	3.03	3.00	3	1.065	1.133	4	1	5
	There is openness to change and new ideas	3.02	3.00	3	1.051	1.105	4	1	5
	I am appreciated and rewarded so I take pride in my work and put in extra effort when it's needed.	3.86	4.00	4	.847	.717	4	1	5
	I work with confidence towards corporate goals	3.90	4.00	4	.837	.700	4	1	5
	I enjoy my work and can focus on the job and the bigger picture.	4.05	4.00	4	.876	.768	4	1	5
	Employees are encouraged to get involved in goal setting	3.36	3.00	4	1.069	1.142	4	1	5
	Employees are treated as individuals and their views and ideas are sought and contributions valued	2.93	3.00	3	1.012	1.024	4	1	5
	Development of employee skills, knowledge and abilities	3.25	3.00	3	1.073	1.152	4	1	5
	Anticipating and meeting customer needs	3.47	4.00	4	.908	.825	4	1	5
Cognitive	The Ministry is committed to help me develop my skills and make progress in a clear career path	4.18	4.00	4	.791	.625	4	1	5
	The Ministry provides resources for me to do my job well.	4.29	4.00	5	.770	.593	4	1	5

engagement									
Physical engagement	We run our day-to-day activities well and learn, adapt and improve and are positive to change	4.45	5.00	5	.702	.492	4	1	5
	I feel that I influence what the Ministry does so I have a bigger personal stake and care more about its success.	4.06	4.00	4	.763	.583	4	1	5
	The Ministry recognizes my personal needs therefore I am here for it.	4.34	4.00	5	.705	.497	4	1	5
	I am proud to work at the Ministry and desire to play my part to keep that reputation.	3.60	4.00	4	.944	.892	4	1	5
	The pay and benefits fairly reflect the value of the work	4.18	4.00	4	.717	.514	4	1	5
	I do my job well because my views are heard and taken seriously.	4.12	4.00	4	.777	.604	4	1	5

Source: Researcher, 2016

Data in table 4.7 shows the descriptive statistics depicting the levels of engagement in the Ministry of Devolution. The data clearly shows the mean statistic for emotional engagement ranging from 3.02 and 4.05; cognitive engagement ranging between 2.93 and 4.29; and physical engagement ranging between 3.60 and 4.65. The median score is 4 throughout. These figures provide an average mean of 3.68 which, when rounded off, gives a figure of 4. It is in this respect that engagement is rated at average significance.

The study then sought to establish the levels of employee productivity. In this regard, the study adopted a self-reporting tool that captured employee evaluations of their productivity. Glengaard (2013) affirms that measurements of self-reports on employee wellbeing and satisfaction have been able to display levels of productivity. Consequently, the respondents were asked to fill a self-rating seven item questionnaire. The results in this regard are presented in table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Employee productivity self- rating scale

	Upper 5%		Upper 10%		Upper 20%		Upper 30%		Middle 50%		Lower 30%		Bottom 20%
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
Productive time spent working on the tasks assigned to me	0	0	0	0	80	67.7	30	25.4	8	6.7	0	0	0
Meeting target quotas and goals	0	0	30	25.4	40	33.8	3	2.5	45	38.1	0	0	0
Overall productivity in getting the job done	5	4.2	25	21.1	14	11.8	23	19.4	36	30.5	15	12.7	
Going beyond what is expected of me to make clients happy	12	10.1	34	28.8	55	46.6	17	14.4	0	0	0	0	0
I respond quickly and courteously to fulfill client needs	56	47.4	28	23.7	34	28.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
The overall quality of service that I provide	10	8.4	57	48.3	30	25.4	21	17.7	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Researcher, 2016

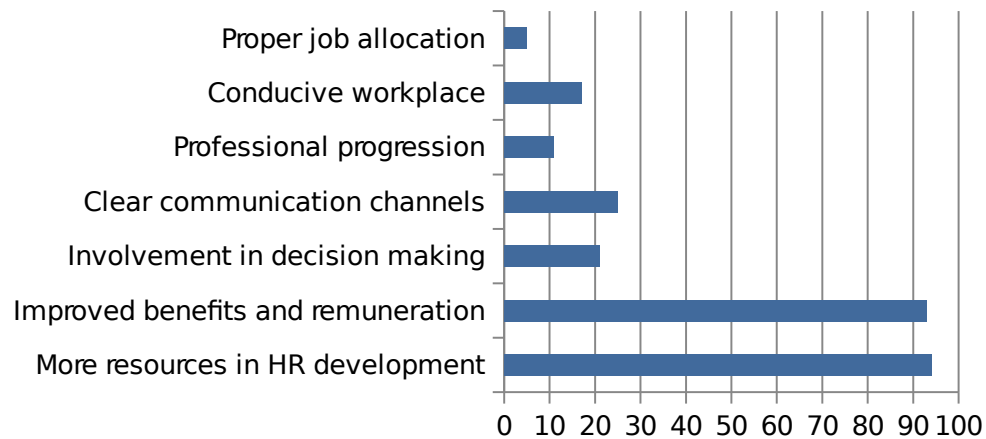
Data in table 4.8 above shows that employees who spent productive time working on tasks to them belonged to the upper 20% (66.7%); and the upper 30% (25.4%). This finding suggests that employees rated themselves as using 70% of their time working on their assigned tasks. With regard to meeting target quotas and goals, majority of respondents (59%) indicated that they belonged to the upper 20% who met their targets

and goals. Those whose overall productivity got the job done (56%) rated themselves as belonging to the upper 50%. However, 43% rated themselves as belonging to the lower tier which indicated that they were not quite productive. With regard to going beyond what is expected of them to make clients happy, 85% of the respondents rated themselves as belonging to the upper 30%; while 100% indicated they responded quickly and courteously to fulfil client needs. In terms of overall quality of service, 82% rated themselves as belonging to the upper 30%. These findings reveal that the employees rate themselves as highly productive as opposed to the average level of engagement. Whereas the engagement index was 4, the productivity index, on a scale of 1 to 10 will rate at an average of 6.

4.6 Strategies to improve employee engagement

The examination of strategies to improve employee engagement in the Ministry of devolution constituted the fourth objective for this study. In this regard, the researcher sought from the respondents what they thought could be done to enhance employee engagement within the ministry. The findings in this regard are presented in figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: Modes of employee engagement



Source: Researcher, (2016)

Data in figure five shows that 94% of the respondents favoured the improvement in benefits and remuneration as an intervention that would enhance employee engagement; while 93% of the respondents indicated the use of more resources in human resource development as a necessary intervention to enhance employee engagement. Clear channels of communication (25%), involvement in decision making (21%) and having a conducive work environment (17%) were minimally indicated as interventions. The findings in figure 5 capture the essence of the observation made by Robinson et al, (2004) with regard to employee engagement. The desire for employees to be engaged proves that leaders in successful organizations engage their employees and encourage them to make frontline decisions. Employees are especially dissatisfied with their level of empowerment on work processes, their involvement in decisions that affect their work and the degree of information sharing from top management about what is going on in their organizations. This view by Robinson et.al is corroborated by the findings which show a need to improve on communication and involvement.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Discussion of the findings

To examine employee engagement in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning, a questionnaire was administered to the target population that was selected through simple random sampling. An overall response rate of 93% having only 8 of the questionnaires not being returned. There are no populations to compare this sample to because no other studies have been carried out to examine employee engagement specifically on work productivity in the public sector.

However, the sample is similar in make up to the population that completed the pilot study survey. The population was concentrated at the Ministry's headquarters and did not put into account the other staff who worked in other regions. The respondents to this survey, 50% were male while 44% were female with only 6% did not respond to this question which shows there was gender parity.

When asked to indicate the number of years worked in the Ministry, 38.1% had worked between 6 to 10 years, 20.9% had worked for 10 to 15 years while 23.6% had worked for over 15 years.

On the first question the study sought to examine the influence of employee engagement on employee productivity within the context of a public service Ministry. In examining this, the study sought to what the employee respondents understood engagement to be and how it affected their work productivity. The study sought to establish what respondents perceived employee engagement to be and how it affected their work; the

modes of employee engagement in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning; the levels of employee engagement; and the measures that could be taken to improve employee engagement. Using a questionnaire, the study collected data regarding employee satisfaction that captured employee engagement. The study captured data that revealed employee perceptions of engagement as participation and involvement in the ministry's goals and mission. Furthermore, most employees of the Ministry were found to be engaged albeit at an average level. With regard to engagement influencing productivity, the study found that there was a correlation between employee engagement and productivity since average employee engagement indices resulted in average productivity indices. The detailed summary is therefore done on the basis of the research questions adopted for this study.

5.1.1 What is employee engagement and how does it affect work productivity in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning?

The study found that employee engagement is viewed as employee participation in decision making and their subsequent commitment to the organization; the emotional attachment the employees had to their work; recognition and reward; and provision of a conducive work environment. Evidently, emotional attachment and employee commitment are employee related aspects while participation, recognition and conducive environment are within the domain of the management of the organization to create.

Moreover, the study found that employees at the Ministry of devolution believed in employee engagement. However, the degree of engagement differed since a sizeable

number of respondents opted to remain neutral with regard to aspects of employee engagement. However, there was consensus that employee engagement does affect employee productivity.

However, when asked the extent to which they allowed their employees to participate in decision making. Three of the respondents indicated that they did most of the time, while 5 respondents indicated that they sometimes engaged their employees in decision making. When asked how they ensured that ministry employees had a shared vision, respondents gave their views as shown in figure 3.

5.1.2 How do you ensure that employees are engaged in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning?

With regard to how employee engagement was carried out in the Ministry, the study found that shared vision was achieved through clear communication objectives, through pulling in the same direction, involvement in decision making and sharing success as ways of sharing the organizations vision. This view corroborated that made by Schmidt (2004) with regard to the importance of the supportive organization. This is perhaps best achieved through a shared vision for the organization as evidenced by the findings above. Moreover, the study found that the ministry used feedback as a way of engaging its employees.

The study also found that employees at the Ministry of Devolution were engaged emotionally, cognitively and physically as suggested by CIPD Survey report (2006c) which defines engagement in terms of three dimensions of employee engagement namely: Emotional engagement – being very involved emotionally in one’s work; Cognitive engagement – focusing very hard whilst at work; and Physical engagement – being willing to ‘go the extra mile’ for your employer. The measure of employee productivity was derived from Woodruffe’s, (2006) assertion that the result of employee engagement is realized in various employee behaviours. These behaviours lead to effective running of the organisation. The study found that employees in the Ministry were engaged more emotionally and cognitively than physically. With regard to emotional engagement, there was trust and respect for leadership and employees enjoyed their work and focused on organizational goals. However, lack of openness to new ideas and that individual and team efforts were not adequately recognized emerged as limitations in emotional engagement.

With regard to cognitive engagement, the study found that employees anticipated and met customer needs, and that The Ministry was committed to helping them develop their skills and make progress in a clear career path. Respondents agreed that the ministry was provident with resources for them to do their jobs well. With regard to physical engagement, the study found that most employees were willing to go an extra mile in their work at the Ministry and that they run their day-to-day activities well and learn, adapt and improve and is positive to change. There was significant interest in the ministry’s work and organizational goals. However, there was dissatisfaction with their

pay and benefits fairly reflect the value of the work they did. This finding clearly captured Shuck, (2011), who asserted that engagement involves individual employee's emotional, cognitive and behavioural state directed toward designed organizational outcomes.

In terms of how employee engagement was carried out in the Ministry, the study established that the most common modes of employee engagement included: Clear communication objectives, sharing success, regularly discussing performance, and listening to employee views. This finding captured the description of engagement by Kahn (1990) in his description of engagement as the harnessing of organizational members to their work role where employees express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during the role performance.

5.1.3 What is the level of employee engagement in the Ministry of Devolution and Planning

This aspect constituted the three levels of engagement namely: Engaged - employees who work with passion and feel a profound connection to their organization. They drive innovation and move the organization forward; not engaged – employees who attend and participate at work but are timeserving and put no passion or energy into their work; and disengaged – employees who are unhappy at work and who act out their unhappiness at work. The study found that employees of the ministry of devolution were engaged emotionally and cognitively and not engaged physically. Consequently, we can

conjecture that employees in the ministry of Devolution are engaged employees though to an average level.

5.1.4 Strategies to improve employee engagement

The examination of strategies to improve employee engagement in the Ministry of devolution revealed that the improvement in benefits and remuneration as an intervention would enhance employee engagement. Moreover, the use of more resources in human resource development as a necessary intervention to enhance employee engagement was cited. Other suggestions for improvement in employee engagement included clear channels of communication, involvement in decision making, and having a conducive work environment. Robinson et al, (2004) affirms the desire for employees to be engaged proves that leaders in successful organizations engage their employees and encourage them to make frontline decisions. Employees are especially dissatisfied with their level of empowerment on work processes, their involvement in decisions that affect their work and the degree of information sharing from top management about what is going on in their organizations. This view by Robinson et.al is corroborated by the findings which show a need to improve on communication and involvement.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the discussion of findings made, the following conclusions can be made.

First, Employee engagement impacts significantly on employee attitudes and commitment which in turn affects productivity. Employee engagement is impacted by

self and relationship management in that vision and direction significantly linked with all the competencies except for adaptability in this study. Organizational effectiveness can be linked to the level of engagement the organisation introduces to its employees.

Through understanding how employees think and feel about their work and which aspects are most important evidence-based decisions can be made on employees and change strategies. This is because issues of transformation revolve around leadership and the influence the leaders have on the followers. Employee engagement also tends to be greatly impacted by leadership in that the responsibility of the drivers of engagement mainly lies with the leadership.

Also, the influence of openness to change and new ideas presents an opportunity for the ministry to realize its objectives better if adopted as a strategy for employee engagement. This is followed by developing others though it does not connect with celebration of individual and team accomplishments and employees encouragement to get involved in goal setting. Emotional engagement is important for employees by being treated as individuals and their views and ideas sought and contributions valued.

Further it was established that the relationship impacted employee engagement. Therefore, there is need for good practice to be instituted on the drivers of engagement for government ministries to ensure that employees are engaged and thus positively impacting productivity. That the ministry is confident that it has personnel who are

pulling together for the common good, and places a premium on its intellectual resources and flexibility on the development of its people.

5.4 Summary of findings

The drivers of employee engagement explored in this study are on areas of policy or practice that often have an influence on engagement which employees tend to respond positively to. Based on the conclusions made above, the following recommendations can be made:

It is recommended that Kenya government ministries recognize the role that employee engagement plays in the achievement of the government's mission.

That Kenya government ministry appreciate and engage in transformational leadership which plays a key role in enhancing employee engagement in this era of attempting to actualize vision 2030. Management should come up with regular training programs that go beyond supervisory skills to embrace development.

That the leadership set up policies and guidelines on the each of the drivers of engagement explored for vision and direction, career development, recognizing employee contribution, line management, work itself and environment, organizational effectiveness and ethics, employee involvement and autonomy, work life balance, reward, information flow and internal communication, resources and corporate image and reputation.

Successful employee engagement requires a holistic approach with multiple functions working together to understand, increase and sustain engagement levels. It is therefore recommended that each government ministry conduct a survey to gauge the engagement levels of the employees and where possible institute changes that positively impact how employees think and feel about their work.

The most significant point identified in the productivity literature is that simply measuring labour productivity is no longer sufficient. In today's workforce this type of measure does not fit with the nature of many jobs – it merely provides a limited view of employees' productivity. An improvement upon this basic measure can be achieved through including multiple input and output factors in the productivity calculation. In this way an organization can gain a wider view of both individual-level and organizational-level productivity that incorporates key factors such as quality, resources and training, among others. Specifically, the importance of work quality when measuring productivity has been highlighted by numerous researchers, academics and consultants. They remark that quality is often as important, if not more important, than quantity in the workplace. Striking a balance between quantity and quality is a challenge for organizations, particularly given increasing globalization and a consumer demand for value.

5.5 Recommendation for further Research

Based on the conclusions made above, this research hopes to stimulate further research, enabling universities to draw on an extensive, coherent body of knowledge to nurture employee engagement.

Therefore this study and its findings should be viewed as a starting point for more extensive research related to institutional factors that influence the enhancement of employee engagement.

Also, research on other variables presumed related, either directly or indirectly to employee engagement should be researched on.

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Appendices

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



THE PRESIDENCY
 MINISTRY OF DEVOLUTION AND PLANNING
 STATE DEPARTMENT OF DEVOLUTION

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MDP/HRD/VOL.II/26

Date: 19th October, 2015

Loise Njeri Kariuki
 Cabinet Affairs Office
 Executive Office of the President
 Harambee House
 NAIROBI

ForWARDED
20/10/2015

Thru'

Director, HRM
 Cabinet Affairs Office

Dear Madam,

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THIS MINISTRY

Your letter dated 21st September, 2015 refers.

This is to confirm that you have been granted permission to collect data and interview employees in the directorates under the Ministry of Devolution and Planning for your research on "*Employee Engagement and its effects on employee productivity*".

Please note that any information gathered during the research is confidential and should be used for this purpose only.

Please submit the instruments that you intend to use for your research for record purpose.

Yours faithfully

Samuel W. Mwangi
Samuel W. Mwangi
 For: Principal Secretary

The Principal Secretary
 Ministry of Devolution and Planning
 State Department of Devolution
 P.O. Box 30004 Nairobi
 Kenya



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Date:
28th October, 2015

NACOSTI/P/15/29204/8246

Loise Njeri Kariuki
Moi University
P.O. Box 3900-30100
ELDORET.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Employee engagement on work productivity in the public sector in Kenya: A case of the Ministry of Devolution and Planning,”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Nairobi County for a period ending **25th October, 2016.**

You are advised to report to the **Principal Secretary, Ministry of Devolution and Planning, the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.


SAID HUSSEIN
FOR: DIRECTOR GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The Principal Secretary
Ministry of Devolution and Planning.

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation is ISO 9001:2008 Certified



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